



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

1917

DEC 26 1978

Dear Dr. Schwartz:

Your letter to President Carter concerning the recent tragedy in Guyana has been referred to me for reply.

The tragedy of Jonestown has no parallel. On Sunday, November 19, the U.S. Government faced a crisis situation in Guyana. A U.S. Congressman and others in his party had been killed. A settlement believed to include about 1,000 Americans was involved, and its situation was uncertain. It was apparent that the limited transportation and other resources of the Government of Guyana might be insufficient to cope with these events in an isolated area 120 miles from the capital. Medical evacuation for the injured Americans by U.S. military aircraft was immediately authorized, and the U.S. Government offered assistance to the Government of Guyana to prevent further loss of life.

The Guyanese indicated they needed helicopter lift and other support. As events progressed, it became evident that many Americans were dead. For a time, it was believed that there might be many survivors in the jungle, and the United States adjusted and increased its assistance to help the search by Guyana police and military. Finally, when the number of dead was clear, the operational requirements were to continue support of the extensive ongoing investigation of serious crimes and to identify, treat with dignity, and remove the bodies as quickly as possible to a facility that could deal with this immense problem. Extensive mortuary facilities were essential in the process of identification and investigation. Only the U.S. military had the equipment and facilities to handle this enormous problem. The removal of the bodies from Guyana was at the specific request of the Government of Guyana.

The Honorable,
David C. Schwartz
96 Savard Street,
P.O. Box 150,
New Brunswick, New Jersey.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR	
REVIEWED BY _____	DATE _____
REASON FOR REMOVAL DATE _____	
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS _____	
DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☐	
RELEASE DATED _____	
FOI EXEMPTIONS _____	

The President, acting under his constitutional authority as Chief Executive and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, ordered the departments of our government to take action to deal with this emergency. The operational decisions within the U.S. Government in this unique situation were made by the Secretary of State in conjunction with other members of the Cabinet.

The Federal Government does not ordinarily pay to bring back the remains of Americans who die abroad. That is a responsibility of their families. If no next of kin can be found, the country where the death occurred is responsible for burial. It was evident, however, that it was beyond the ability of individual families or of the facilities available in Guyana to resolve the unprecedented problems that characterized this situation. In fact, it was not even clear who the next of kin were without identification being established. The families of those who died at Jonestown are, of course, expected to bear the responsibility for the disposition of the remains in the United States.

The costs to the Government of an effort of this magnitude obviously are considerable although substantially less than the \$8 million figure used in some press reports. It will be some time before the total is known. The Office of Management and Budget, together with other agencies, is reviewing the financial aspects.

The Department of Justice is fully exploring possible legal remedies which can be used to recover the cost the U.S. Government has incurred in removing and processing the bodies of Americans from Guyana. It will be some time before the results of these efforts are known, but you may be assured that we will continue to make every effort to keep the costs to the U.S. Government to the minimum necessary.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter III
Assistant Secretary
for Public Affairs and
Department Spokesman

ID DOS 781211075

THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE

7823712

REFERRAL

TO: DCS

DATE: DEC 11 78

REPLY: DIRECT REPLY. FURNISH INFORMATION COPY

IF MORE THAN 9 DAYS DELAY IS ENCOUNTERED PLEASE TELEPHONE MS. BYRNE 456-2113

BASIC CORRESPONDENCE AND CONTROL SHEET AND COPY OF RESPONSE (OR DRAFT) MUST BE
RETURNED TO: AGENCY LIAISON (ROOM 94) WHITE HOUSE.

REMARKS:

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X LETTER

MAILGRAM

TELEGRAM

DATED: DEC 04 78

TO: PRESIDENT CARTER

FROM: DAVID C. SCHWARTY, ASSEMBLY MAN DIST. 17, GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF N.J.

TRENTON, 96 BAYARD ST., P.O. BOX 150, NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ 08901

SUBJECT: OPPOSES TRANSPORTATION COST (PEOPLE'S TEMPLE)

RESPONSE:

CLOSED OUT:

BY DIRECTION OF THE PRESIDENT:

PAMELA ZINN

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF CORRESPONDENCE

7823712



GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF NEW JERSEY
TRENTON

DR. DAVID C. SCHWARTZ
ASSEMBLYMAN, DISTRICT 17 (MIDDLESEX-SOMERSET)
96 BAYARD ST.
P. O. Box 150
NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. 08901
TEL. 201-545-8310

December 4, 1978

President Jimmy Carter
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, D. C.

Dear President Carter:

I write to inform you that a number of my constituents have expressed, to me, strong objections to the U. S. taxpayer bearing the major costs of transporting the dead bodies of the People's Temple cultists to the United States. I would be grateful if you would take this viewpoint, a viewpoint with which I feel some sympathy, into account when you are contemplating further action on this tragic matter -- as, for example, in deciding on action-- if any -- regarding assets of the Temple, it's cultists and it's leaders.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

David C. Schwartz

David C. Schwartz

DCS:jff

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

ACTION SLIP

(Attachment Classification)

S/S CONTROL NUMBER

7823712

ACTION ASSIGNED TO:

PA

DATE

12/12

(Action Office Instructions on Reverse)

ACTION REQUESTED

STATE TO NSC MEMO
STATE TO

with Draft reply for signature
by
with Comment or Recommendation

DIRECT REPLY

provide info copy under cover
of State-NSC transmittal form
provide comeback copy
for

REPLY FOR SIGNATURE
BY

RECOMMENDATION FOR
with Memorandum for the President

APPROPRIATE HANDLING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

DUE IN S/S BY:

12/22

CLEAR WITH:

REMARKS/SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Use of this slip is optional.
Attachment to: _____
Date: _____

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FROM:

MARIE MORRIS

(NAME)

S/S-S:

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